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Noted by DCI

WE

13 September 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing of General Eisenhower in his office at Gettysburg, Friday, September 11th - 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.

1. I recalled that I had briefed General Eisenhower on August 6th, immediately following the incidents of the Gulf of Tonkin.

2. I reviewed the developments since early August in South Vietnam, reporting to Eisenhower the actions taken by Khanh following the Tonkin incident, i.e., declaring a state of emergency and the decree reorganizing the government. This was followed by popular uprisings, the withdrawal of Khanh from the government, the conduct of government by Deputy Prime Minister Oanh, the return of Khanh, the reestablishment of a government under a triumvirate, the positioning of Big Minh as titular head of the government and the restoration of a very fragile, but at the same time, a peaceful situation in Saigon. I emphasized the fragility of the situation, my concern over the deepening schisms between Catholics and Buddhists, Dai Viets and other political entities, segments of the military and various political or religious sects. I said for this reason CIA estimated the future was very ominous and that we believed chances of continuing a reliable government in South Vietnam were less than even. I also commented on my concern about the deep down purposes of the Buddhists and its leader Tri Quang and also the anti-American sentiment which had been expressed though very minor might grow. I reported that the military situation was remaining "as is" with no attempt by the VC to capitalize on the confused political situation, that the Vietnamese military commands were carrying on, that the Communists were attempting political infiltration as the best means of capitalizing on the situation.

Eisenhower felt the situation most critical. He had no suggestions to offer.

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2. Reviewed briefly the situation in Laos, the attempts to reach an understanding through negotiations in Paris, the fact that de Gaulle had put his prestige on the line but that so far the talks had made no progress whatsoever. I commented on the difficulty of assessing the Communist attitude following the Tonkin Gulf episode as evidenced by Peiping's accusation of Moscow supporting the U.S. in Southeast Asia, the relatively moderate response from Hanoi and Peiping, the willingness of Souvannaphong to go to Paris and the absence of dynamic military action on the part of the Pathet Lao. Eisenhower felt that these situations were difficult to assess but they might be holding back for fear of more serious strike by the U.S. forces.

3. I summarized the situation in Cyprus and the stalemate that had been reached in the negotiations and the dangers inherent in the Cyprus situation because of Makarios' invitation for help from Nasser and Khrushchev. Eisenhower continues to feel that some sort of partition of Cyprus is the only solution to the problem. This view he has expressed to me on numerous occasions.

4. I reported that the Congo situation had improved in the last 30 days. Tshombe had come out better in the African conference than we had expected, that he had handled himself quite well, and while he had not received actual military assistance, he had not lost the gain because the conference had refused to hear or recognize the rebel government.

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(b)(3)

[redacted]

5. With respect to Malaysia-Indonesia situation, I reviewed the issues, the passage of the British fleet unit through the Sunda Straits and the probability that the fleet would return in the next few days which might cause a confrontation between Great Britain and Indonesia. I expressed the view that the British were going to back up the Malaysians and support them against any overt or excessive guerrilla operations by the Indonesians and that a serious situation might develop at any time.

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6. I brought Eisenhower up to date on Cuba and advised him that we expected that shortly after the election Castro would strongly oppose U-2 reconnaissance over Cuba and very possibly attempt to shoot down a U-2 plane. I said we were working towards having the O ready to introduce if this situation developed, but not at all sure that we would do so. I reported all significant current intelligence on Cuba.

7. Reviewed the most recent Soviet military developments as covered by briefing memorandum and also the status of the estimate on ChiCom Advance Weapon Development, most particularly the test site at Lop Nor and the

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8. Reviewed my proposed trip with Eisenhower. He expressed great interest in it and its purposes and specifically asked that his personal regards be extended to General de Gaulle.

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